

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1392

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COMUSFORAZ

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 0047

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: MOTA AMARAL'S VIEWS OF CURRENT AZOREAN SITUATION

1. ON JANUARY 27 PPD DEPUTY JOAO BOSCO MTTA AMARAL SAID HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE AZORES. THE WEEKS OF CONFUSION CREATED BY THE DISPUTE OVER THE DECREE LAW ON THE POWERS OF THE REGIONAL JUNTA HAD REENFORCED THE DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE ESPECIALLY AMONG THE FARMERS. HE WAS AFRAID THAT IF THE STATUTE OF AUTONOMY, AS APPROVED BY THE REGIONAL JUNTA, WERE NOT APPROVED BY THE GOP IN THE NEAR FUTURE, THE SITUATION IN THE AZORES WOULD BECOME UNCONTROLLABLE. SPECIFICALLY HE WAS AFRAID THAT THE WILD RIGHT WING OF FLA WOULD RESORT TO VIOLENCE WHICH IN TURN COULD LEAD TO MILITARY REPRESSION AND THE END TO ALL HOPES OF DEMOCRACY IN THE AZORES. MOTA AMARAL HEARD THAT GENERAL MAGALHAES HAD TOLD THE GOP THAT IF THE STATUTE WERE NOT APPROVED AS SUBMITTED HE COULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SITUATION IN THE AZORES. THE PPD LEADER WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE FATE OF THE STATUTE IN GOP HANDS.

2. MOTA AMARAL SAID THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE STATUTE, INCORPORATING IDEAS PUT FORTH DURING THE RECENT PUBLIC DEBATE, WOULD BE COMPLETED

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THE FIRST WEEK IN FEBRUARY. HE BELIEVED THE BEST COURSE WOULD BE

FOR THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO APPROVE PRINCIPLES OF JUTONOMY BASED ON THE STATUTE. HE WAS A LITTLE AFRAID THAT A FULL SCALE DEBATE ON THE AZORES IN THE ASSEMBLY WOULD BE A NO WIN SITUATION FOR THE PPD BECAUSE THE PCP AND PS MIGHT ACCUSE IT AND THE CDS OF SUPPORTING FLA AND DEMAND CLARIFICATION OF THEIR POSITIONS.

3. MOTA AMARAL STATED THE NATIONAL PPD SUPPORTED EXTENSIVE AUTONOMY FOR THE AZORES AND POINTED TO A RECENT PRESS INTERVIEW BY SA CARNEIRO IN WHICH HE ADVOCATED POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AUTONOMY FOR THE AZORES.

4. MOTA AMARAL STRESSED THAT WHEN THE STATUTE IS APPROVED IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO PUBLICLY STATE THAT IT IS THE BEGINNING OF A PROCESS, AND NOT THE FINAL SOLUTION. HE THOUGHT THAT MOST AZOREANS INCLUDING THE FLA RIGHT WING WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH THAT. HE CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT CONDITIONS IN THE AZORES AND THE LACK OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT ERGUE AGAINST AN UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE BY THE AZORES NOW.

5. MOTA AMARAL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE CDS HAS GAINED IN THE AZORES AND WOULD PICK UP A NUMBER OF CONSERVATIVE VOTES FROM THE PPD IN THE NEXT ELECTIONS. THE PPD, IN TURN, HOWEVER, WOULD GAIN A NUMBER OF SOCIALIST VOTES. HE ADDED THAT MONEY WAS A PROBLEM FOR THE PPD THE HONTA DELGADA DISTRICT HAD SPENT TEN TOUSAND DOLLARS SINCE ITS ORGANIZATION AND MANY OF ITS BILLS WERE STILL UNPAID.

COMMENT: BECAUSE THE GOP HAS NOT YET PUBLISHED THE NEW VERSION OF THE DECREE LAW ON THE POWERS OF THE REGIONAL JUNTA, THE JUNTA HAS ISSUED ONLY A BRIEF COMMUNIQUE STATING THE GOP HAD GRANTED IT EXTENSIVE POWERS. AS A RESULT, MANY ARE SKEPTICAL AND THE LEVEL OF TENSION, HAS REMAINED FAIRLY HIGH. FLA'S GRAFFITI PAINTERS ARE AS ACTIVE AS EVER, AND THE RUMOR MILL IS GRINDING AWAY.
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